

Martha Williamson for her work and honor her devotion to American families by presenting her the Freedom Works Award. She provides millions of Americans with an uplifting hour of entertainment each week. The size of her audience should remind all of us and should remind the entertainment industry that family programming sells. The market responds to families everywhere working to reinforce values.

Mr. Speaker, freedom works and, Martha, if I may, your programs, both of them, work for me and my wife. We watch every week. Not only do we watch, but our minister and his wife watch and then the four of us get together and we compare notes and we discuss the show, and we see what lessons we can draw for ourselves and our lives.

The encouraging thing that I receive from my minister, not that my judgment is something I would trust on this matter, but that his is, that Martha, your shows are always true to Scripture as well as to sound values, sound advice, sound lessons for the American family. I want to add, then, my personal and, for my wife Susan and myself, our personal appreciation for your show.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ARMEY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for yielding. I want to begin by congratulating the majority leader. This is a wonderful award, the Freedom Works Award, and I think he is doing excellent work in helping to single out "Touched By An Angel" and "Promised Land" and Martha Williamson and the work which she is doing in this area. I cannot give him enough praise for helping to create something like this that does focus upon that which should be given special honor.

Television has been called a vast wasteland and it struggles every day to find a balance between America's insatiable appetite for escape and its extraordinary capacity to teach. Entertainment programming in particular often panders to the familiar human desire to turn the brain off simply by turning the tube on. Yet as a mass medium, television has the greatest potential since the dawn of civilization for prodding society to confront its troubles and to look within for a renewal of the values of community and caring.

This potential is usually realized in news or documentary formats or in made-for-television specials, but not in regularly scheduled entertainment programming. Yet out of this tension, there occasionally rises programming that breaks the mold, that finds the balance but projects a level of quality and thoughtfulness that transcends its format and sets a new standard for the rest of the industry. Martha Williamson and her colleagues have ac-

complished as much with the creation of these two excellent shows. They get high ratings, but they send a positive family message out to America.

I recently discovered that the poet Maya Angelou wrote a poem especially for "Touched By An Angel." It closes with these lines: "Yet it is only love which sets us free."

I want to congratulate Martha and everyone who works on this program for having the courage to send this simple message to every American home each week. I congratulate CBS for having the courage of putting these two programs on. The outstanding public response to them is evidence that their judgment was correct. In conclusion, once again I want to congratulate the majority leader for taking the leadership in creating this award.

NAFTA EXPANSION PULLED FROM SUSPENSION CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. PACKARD]. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Speaker GINGRICH has tried it again. Earlier this year, the Speaker attempted to insert the Caribbean Basin initiative into the budget bill. The Caribbean Basin initiative would have expanded NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, passed 4 years ago, would have expanded NAFTA to 26 Caribbean and Central American nations all buried in a budget bill that no one really would have understood or seen. Today Speaker GINGRICH was trying it one more time. H.R. 2644, the United States-Caribbean trade partnership, again basically the same issue, there was an attempt today to put it on the Suspension Calendar and ram it through Congress with no amendments, with not very much discussion and put together with a whole lot of other issues and a whole lot of other pieces of legislation. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of people on both sides of the aisle that do not think we should expand NAFTA with only 20 or 30 minutes of debate, we should expand NAFTA to 26 more Caribbean and Central American nations, fortunately because there is so little support for that in this body, even though the support comes from the Republican leadership, that initiative was pulled off the calendar today.

That means that this Congress will in fact have an opportunity to debate the Caribbean Basin initiative at some point, and I believe that Congress ultimately will defeat it because there simply is not the support in this body for expanding NAFTA for those kinds of trade agreements.

That clearly speaks to the next step. The next step is within the next 2 weeks, Congress will likely vote on giving the President the authority, the fast track authority to negotiate other

trade agreements with Latin American countries. There clearly is not a majority of Members' support in this Congress to give the President fast track authority to expand NAFTA. It is pretty clear that this body should think twice before we rush headlong into a series of trade agreements that cost us American jobs, in trade agreements that jeopardize American food safety, in trade agreements that question the viability of truck safety on America's highways, that we should think twice before rushing into another series of trade agreements that jeopardize health and safety and jobs in this country before we fix the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The North American Free Trade Agreement, passed in 1993 in this country, has already cost hundreds of thousands of American jobs. The North American Free Trade Agreement has jeopardized American food safety, stories of strawberries that have infected Michigan schoolchildren with hepatitis A, strawberries coming from Mexico, raspberries coming from Guatemala, all kinds of food products coming into this country, not well enough inspected at the Mexican border; food products grown under conditions not acceptable in this country, where pesticides that are banned in the United States in many cases are actually legal in Mexico and Central America and other Latin American countries, where the North American Free Trade Agreement, and if expanded by the President's and Speaker GINGRICH's request, expanding those trade agreements to other countries in Latin America clearly will mean more problems at the border, more problems with food safety, more contaminated food in our country's food supply and our country's grocery stores, more problems with truck safety as trucks come across to the tune of thousands of trucks a day across the border now confined only to New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California, but as those trucks move into the other 44 States of the mainland, we clearly will have even more problems with truck safety.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we should defeat fast track, not rush headlong into an agreement, into a new series of agreements that costs American jobs, jeopardizes American food safety and truck safety. We should defeat fast track today. I applaud the Speaker for pulling off the calendar the Caribbean Basin initiative. It was a bad idea. Fast track is a bad idea. We should defeat both those agreements when they come to the floor of the House of Representatives.

A HISTORIC VISIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about a very controversial and